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**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

1    1.    A method in a data processing system for creating
2    rules to process electronic messages:
3         detecting user input moving an electronic message
4    into a folder;
5         comparing characteristics of the electronic message
6    with other electronic messages in the folder to form a
7    comparison; and
8         generating a rule to process electronic messages
9    based on the comparison.

1    2.    The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2         processing received messages using the rule.

1    3.    The method of claim 2, wherein the processing step
2    is initiated in response to another user input approving
3    use of the rule.

1    4.    The method of claim 1, wherein the criteria includes
2    priority-based common fields and common content.

1    5.    The method of claim 1, wherein the folder is a trash
2    folder.

1    6.    The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting step,
2    the comparing step, and the generating step are initiated
3    in response to a selected user input.

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7.    The method of claim 1, wherein the criteria includes
at least one of a sender address, a selected word in a
subject line body of the electronic message, a select
word in a body of the electronic message, and an
attribute of the time/date field of the electronic
message.

8.    The method of claim 1, wherein the other electronic
messages in the folder are electronic messages selected
through user input.

9.    The method of claim 1 further comprising:
     generating the rule to process electronic messages
based on characteristics of the electronic message if
other electronic messages in the folder are absent.

10.    The method of claim 1 further comprising:
     generating the rule to process electronic messages
based on characteristics of the electronic message if
other electronic messages in the folder are unselected by
user input.

11.    The method of claim 10 further comprising:
     presenting the rule for review; and
     using the rule to process electronic messages if
user input accepting the rule is received.

12.    The method of claim 11 further comprising:
     presenting a modification of the rule if user input
accepting the rule is absent.

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1 13. A method in a data processing system for processing
2 electronic messages, the method comprising the data
3 processing system implemented steps of:
4     identifying an action on an electronic message;
5     identifying characteristics of the electronic
6 message using a criteria to form a comparison; and
7     generating a rule to process electronic messages
8 including the action and a selected characteristic
9 identified in the comparison.

1 14. The method of claim 13, wherein the action is a
2 deletion of the electronic message.

1 15. The method of claim 13 further comprising:
2     responsive to the action being performed on other
3 electronic messages comparing characteristics of the
4 electronic message the other electronic messages.

1 16. The method of claim 13, wherein the action is a
2 movement of the electronic message into a folder
3 containing other electronic messages and wherein the step
4 of identifying characteristics comprises:
5     comparing the electronic message to other electronic
6 messages using the criteria to form the comparison.

1 17. A data processing system comprising:
2     a bus system;
3     a communications unit connected to the bus system;

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4      a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the

5    memory includes as set of instructions; and

6      a processing unit connected to the bus system,

7    wherein the processing unit executes  the set of

8    instructions to identify an action on an electronic

9    message, identify characteristics of the electronic

10   message using a criteria to form a comparison, and

11   generate a rule to process electronic messages including

12   the action and a selected characteristic identified in

13   the comparison.


1  18.   The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the

2    bus system is a single bus.


1  19.   The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the

2    bus system includes a primary bus and a secondary bus.


1  20.   The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the

2    processing unit includes a plurality of processors.


1  21. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the

2    communications unit is one of a modem and Ethernet

3    adapter.


1  22.   A data processing system in a data processing system

2    for creating rules to process electronic messages:

3      detecting means for detecting user input moving an

4    electronic message into a folder;

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5      comparing means for comparing characteristics of the

6  electronic message with other electronic messages in the

7  folder to form a comparison; and

8      generating means for generating a rule to process

9  electronic messages based on the comparison.

1  23.  The data processing system of claim 22 further

2  comprising:

3      processing means for processing received messages

4  using the rule.

1  24.  The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the

2  routing means is activated in response to another user

3  input approving use of the rule.

1  25.  The data processing system of claim 21, wherein the

2  criteria includes priority-based common fields and common

3  content.

1  26. The data processing system of claim 21, wherein the

2  folder is a trash folder.

1  27.  The data processing system of claim 21, wherein the

2  detecting means, the comparing means, and the generating

3  means are activated in response to a selected user input.

1  28.  The data processing system of claim 21, wherein the

2  criteria includes at least one of a sender address, a

3  selected word in a subject line body of the electronic

4  message, a select word in a body of the electronic

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5   message, and an attribute of the time/date field of the

6   electronic message.

1   29.   The data processing system of claim 21, wherein the

2   other electronic messages in the folder are electronic

3   messages selected through user input.

1   30.   The data processing system of claim 21 further

2   comprising:

3        generating means for generating the rule to process

4   electronic messages based on characteristics of the

5   electronic message if other electronic messages in the

6   folder are absent.

1   31. The data processing system of claim 21 further

2   comprising:

3        generating means for generating the rule to process

4   electronic messages based on characteristics of the

5   electronic message if other electronic messages in the

6   folder are unselected by user input.

1   32. The data processing system of claim 31 further

2   comprising:

3        presenting means for presenting the rule for review;

4   and

5        using means for using the rule to process electronic

6   messages if user input accepting the rule is received.

1   33. The data processing system of claim 32 further

2   comprising:

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3    presenting means for presenting a modification of

4    the rule if user input accepting the rule is absent.


1    34.   A data processing system for processing electronic

2    messages, the data processing system comprising the data

3    processing system implemented steps of:

4        first identifying means for identifying an action on

5    an electronic message;

6        second identifying means for identifying

7    characteristics of the electronic message using a

8    criteria to form a comparison; and

9        generating means for generating a rule to process

10   electronic messages including the action and a selected

11   characteristic identified in the comparison.


1    35.   The data processing system of claim 34, wherein the

2    action is a deletion of the electronic message.


1    36.   The data processing system of claim 34 further

2    comprising:

3        responsive means for responsive to the action being

4    performed on other electronic messages comparing

5    characteristics of the electronic message the other

6    electronic messages.


1    37.   The data processing system of claim 34, wherein the

2    action is a movement of the electronic message into a

3    folder containing other electronic messages and wherein

4    the second identifying means comprises:

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5      comparing means for comparing the electronic message

6 to other electronic messages using the criteria to form

7 the comparison.

1   38.  A computer program product in a computer readable

2 medium for use in a data processing system for creating

3 rules to process electronic messages:

4      first instructions for detecting user input moving

5 an electronic message into a folder;

6      second instructions for comparing characteristics of

7 the electronic message with other electronic messages in

8 the folder to form a comparison; and

9      third instructions for generating a rule to process

10 electronic messages based on the comparison.

1   39.  A computer program product in a data processing

2 system for processing electronic messages, the computer

3 program product comprising the data processing system

4 implemented steps of:

5      first instructions for identifying an action on an

6 electronic message;

7      second instructions for identifying characteristics

8 of the electronic message using a criteria to form a

9 comparison; and

10      third instructions for generating a rule to process

11 electronic messages including the action and a selected

12 characteristic identified in the comparison.